ERIC Document Resume	See Instruction Sheet	DATE OF RESUME 8/17/65	DATE RECEIVED

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ERIC NUMBER	2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S).	3. IDENTIFICATION NO.	DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW
ED000562	7313		

4. AUTHOR(S): McKenna, David L.

5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED: Report on College Sophomore Achievement Testing

6. PUBLICATION TITLE: N.A.

7. EDITOR(S): N.A.

8. PLACE OF ORIGIN
ORG. Spring Arbor Jr. College
ST.
CITY, STATE Spring Arbor, Michigan
TELE. EXT.
INST/LOC CODE

9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE: Spring Arbor Junior College

10. VOL.	11. PAGES	12. MO./YR.	13. TOTAL PP.
N.A.	N.A.	59	

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TYPE OF REPORT
PROPOSAL ☐
IN-PROGRESS ☐
FINAL ☒
FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR: Experimental Study

16. INDEXING TERMS (6-12)

	achievement	curriculum	social studies	
		requirements	reading	
experimental studies	students	mathematics	examinations	
junior college	counseling	science	language arts	

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Results of a battery of achievement tests taken by graduating sophomores. Purpose of study: To compare achievement of these students with that of college sophomores on a national norm, to assist the student to identify weak and strong areas in his liberal arts education as a guide in pursuing upper division work, and to evaluate curricular areas in terms of achievement of students and course requirements. Areas of testing were mathematics, science, social studies, reading, and writing.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION	20. DIVISION OR DEPT.	21. CONTRACT NO. / PROJECT NO.
	22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT	
	23. DURATION OF PROJECT	U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education

ERIC Form 1

IV--21

7313

College Sophomore Achievement
Testing At
Spring Arbor Junior College
David L. McKenna

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
Office of Education

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REPORT ON COLLEGE SOPHOMORE ACHIEVEMENT TESTING

As part of the program to ascertain the quality of the educational function of Spring Arbor Junior College, the graduating college sophomores of 1959 were required to take a battery of achievement tests called the Sequential Tests of Educational Progress. The areas of testing were Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Reading and Writing. Prior to the testing, the following purposes were proposed for the results: (a) to compare the achievement of our college sophomores with the achievement of college sophomores on a national norm; (b) to assist the student to identify weak and strong areas in his liberal arts education by which his upper division work may be guided; and (c) to evaluate the curricular areas in terms of the achievement of the students and the course requirements.

I. The Ability of the College Sophomores:

On the basis of the American Council of Education Psychological Examination which the college sophomores took at the time of their orientation to college in the fall of 1957, their average percentile rank was 60. This was in comparison with national junior college norms and indicates that about 40% of the entering college freshmen were above our students in ability and 60% below. This means that our typical graduating college sophomore is one who has above average ability to do college work.

II. The Achievement of the College Sophomores:

The performance of these sophomores on the S.T.E.P. achievement tests showed that they performed above average in reading, about average in mathematics and writing, and slightly below average in science and social studies. The mean percentile rank of their collective percentile ranks are:

Mean Percentile Ranks

Reading	55 %ile
Mathematics	50 %ile
Writing	48 %ile
Science	45 %ile
Social Studies	40 %ile

These scores would indicate some discrepancy between the ability of the college sophomores and their achievement. However, it should be noted that while the ability percentile rank of 60 is based on junior college norms, the achievement percentile ranks are compared with national liberal arts college norms. A survey of the four-year liberal arts colleges from which the norms are drawn indicates that the majority of them are private and have selective admissions policies. Therefore, it may be assumed that our students' achievement performance is average in comparison with the achievement of other junior college students if such norms were established. Even then, the study suggests that the average student is not achieving up to the level of his ability.

III. Analysis and Recommendations:

It is of interest to note that Reading, Mathematics and Writing rank higher than Science and Social Studies. Analysis would suggest that these are skills which have been developed over a period of years. Although none of the students had had a course in reading while in Spring Arbor and very few of them had taken a mathematics course, the tests were practical enough to call forth general achievemer rather than specific college achievement. On the other hand, the Science and Social Studies tests emphasized specialized areas of study which are primarily college-related. These include Chemistry, Physics, Astronomy, Geology, Botany and Zoology in the Science tests and Economics, Sociology, Political Science, World History and Geography in the Social Studies. The fact that the students' poorest performance was on the Social Studies test prompted further analysis. It was found that the students who took only the required social science course in Political Science and perhaps United States History course scored below the 50th percentile much more frequently than did those students who elected a third or fourth course in the area, i.e, economics, sociology or geography.

On the basis of this report, it is recommended:

1. That the Sequential Tests of Educational Progress be continued as a graduation requirement for all sophomores.

2. That the faculty member expect a higher level of achievement out of the college students which is in accord with their ability. Also, a further distinction should be made between the expectations for the freshman and the sophomore because 85% of the graduates continue in a four-year college and must compete with students at that level.

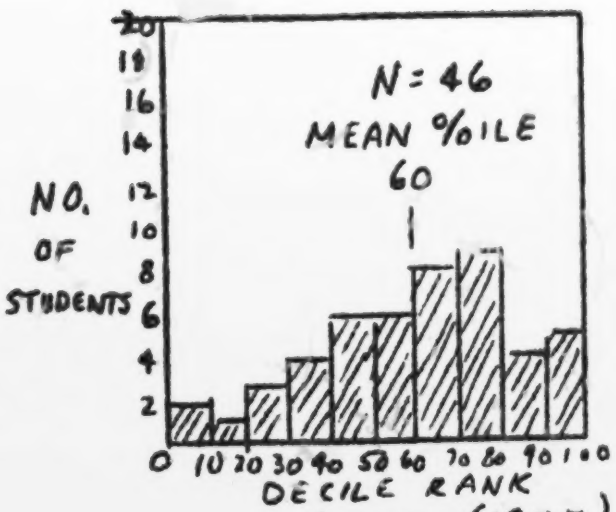
3. That the faculty member seek to improve the achievement of the students through his own professional advancement. A higher level of achievement is not accomplished by additional work alone, but by improving the level of instruction, methods of teaching, techniques of evaluation and classroom preparation.

4. That the students be advised to include in their two-year program Social Studies courses from at least three different areas in order to acquaint them with the various concepts of social behavior.

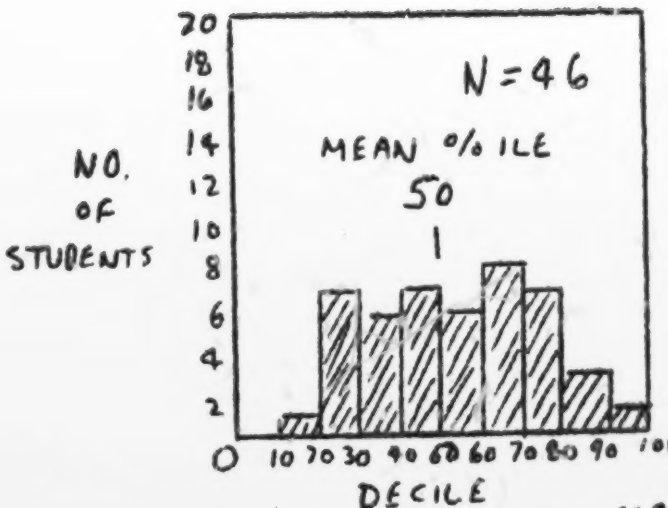
5. That an experimental course in the Physical Sciences be introduced in conjunction with a course in the Biological Sciences in order to provide the student with an orientation in each of these areas.

6. That a reading improvement class be included in the remedial offerings for the college freshmen and that writing skills receive renewed emphasis in the first year Composition classes.

7. That the student recruiting program be actively directed toward the prospect whose high school grades and test scores indicate an ability to do college work.



A. C. E. (1957)
(JR. COLLEGE NORMS)



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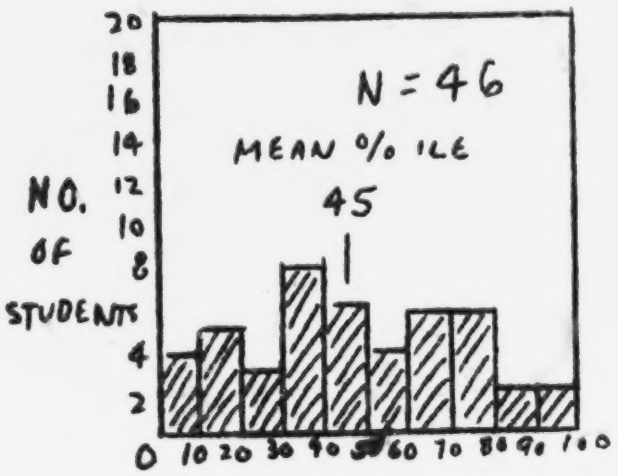

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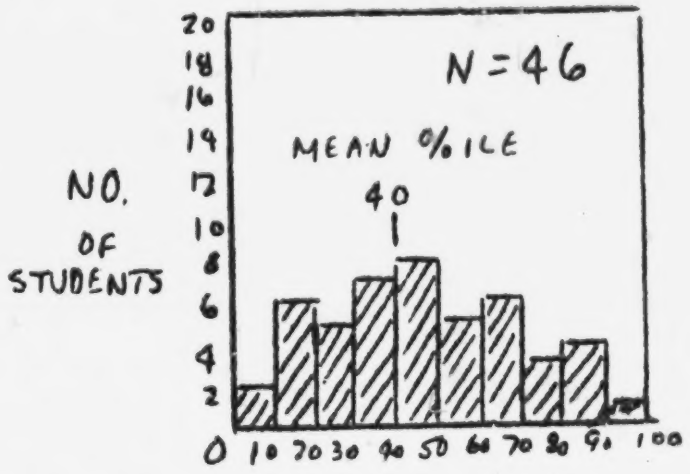

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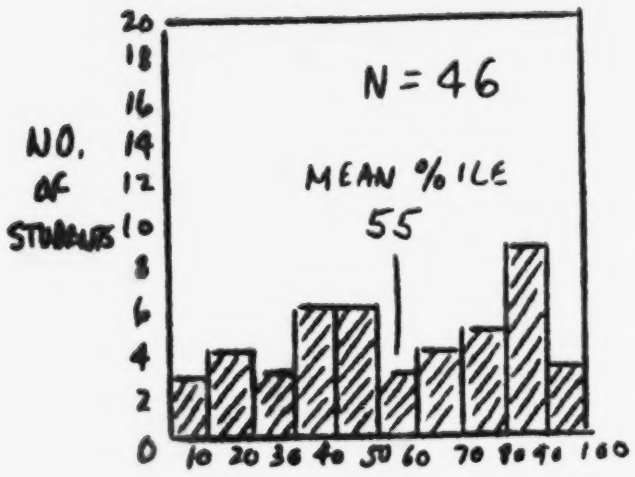

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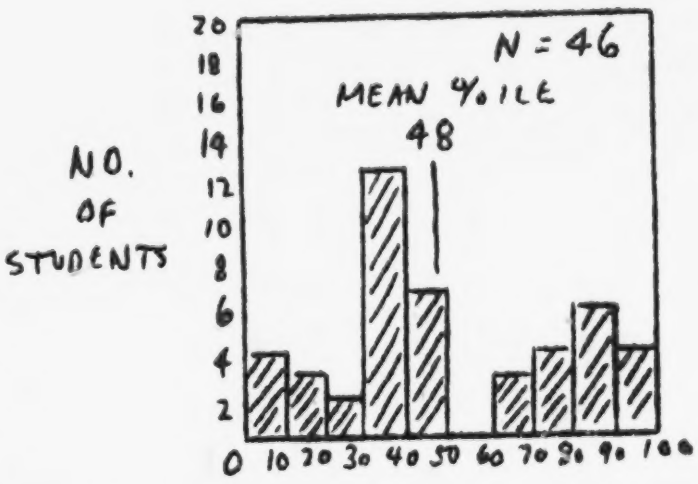

WRITING

SEQUENTIAL TESTS OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS